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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/544,188	09/30/2005	Marnix Van Der Mee	124873	8302
25944	7590	03/15/2006	EXAMINER TA, THO DAC	
OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC P.O. BOX 19928 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320			ART UNIT 2833	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 03/15/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/544,188	VAN DER MEE ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Tho D. Ta	2833	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 17-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 17-32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 01 August 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                        | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)               | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.  |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>8/1/05</u> .  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.                                    |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 17-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 17, last two lines, it is unclear as to what "a width" and "the length" are actually referred to since applicant has not define clearly what portions of the tab are the width and the length.

Claim 20, last two lines, it is unclear as to what "the height" is actually referred to since applicant has not define clearly what portion of the tab is the height.

Claim 21, line 2, the limitation "the base" lacks antecedent basis.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 17-19, 21-24, 26-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Anhalt et al. (4,431,244).

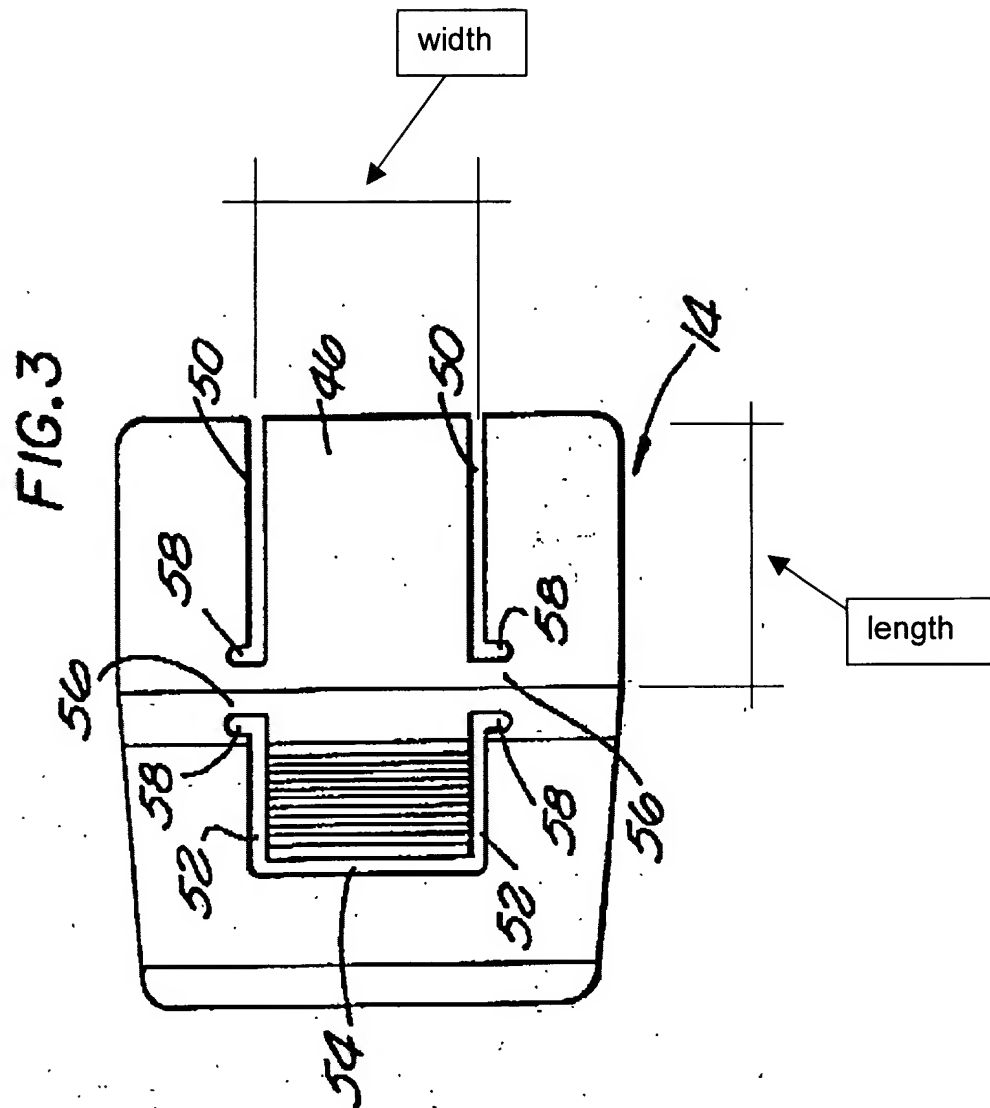
In regard to claim 17, Anhalt et al. discloses an electrical connector having a housing comprising: a first housing element 14 provided with at least a first connection

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portion that is female; and a second housing element 12 provided with at least one second connection portion that is male, respectively, suitable for co-operating with the first connection portion; the first connection portion including at least one elastically deformable tab 46 made integrally with the corresponding connection portion in the thickness of a cylindrical of the connection portion, which wall defines a single cavity that presents, in cross-section, at least one side in the form of a straight line segment, the tab 46 extending, in cross-section, along the side, wherein the tab 46 presents, in cross-section, a width that is greater than half the length of the side (see attached drawing).

In regard to claim 18, Anhalt et al. discloses that the cylindrical wall presents, in cross-section, two sides forming substantially parallel straight line segments (see figures 2 and 4).

In regard to claim 19, Anhalt et al. discloses that the cylindrical wall presents a cross-section that is substantially rectangular (see fig. 1).

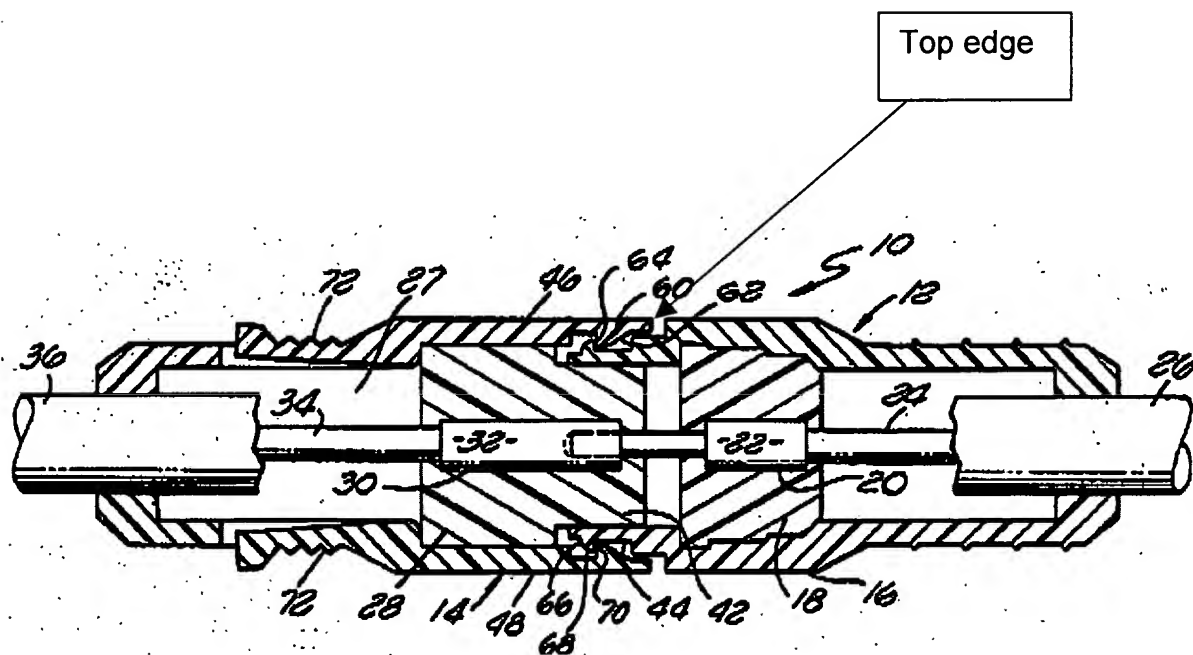


In regard to claim 21, Anhalt et al. discloses that the elastically deformable tab 46 presents a free end (adjacent 62) that is remote from the base 28 of the corresponding connection portion.

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In regard to claim 22, Anhalt et al. discloses that the at least one tab 46 includes at least one portion 60 in relief on a face that comes to bear against the other connection portion (see fig. 2).

In regard to claim 23, Anhalt et al. discloses that the at least one tab 46 has a top edge (see attached drawing), wherein the at least one portion 60 in relief is adjacent to the top edge or is situated in the proximity thereof.



In regard to claim 24, Anhalt et al. discloses that the portion 60 in relief is in the form of a rib extending transversely to the longitudinal direction of the tab 46.

In regard to claim 26, Anhalt et al. discloses that one of the connection portions has two facing elastically deformable tabs 46, 48.

In regard to claim 27, Anhalt et al. discloses that each tab 46, 48 is substantially plane in shape, preferably being rectangular.

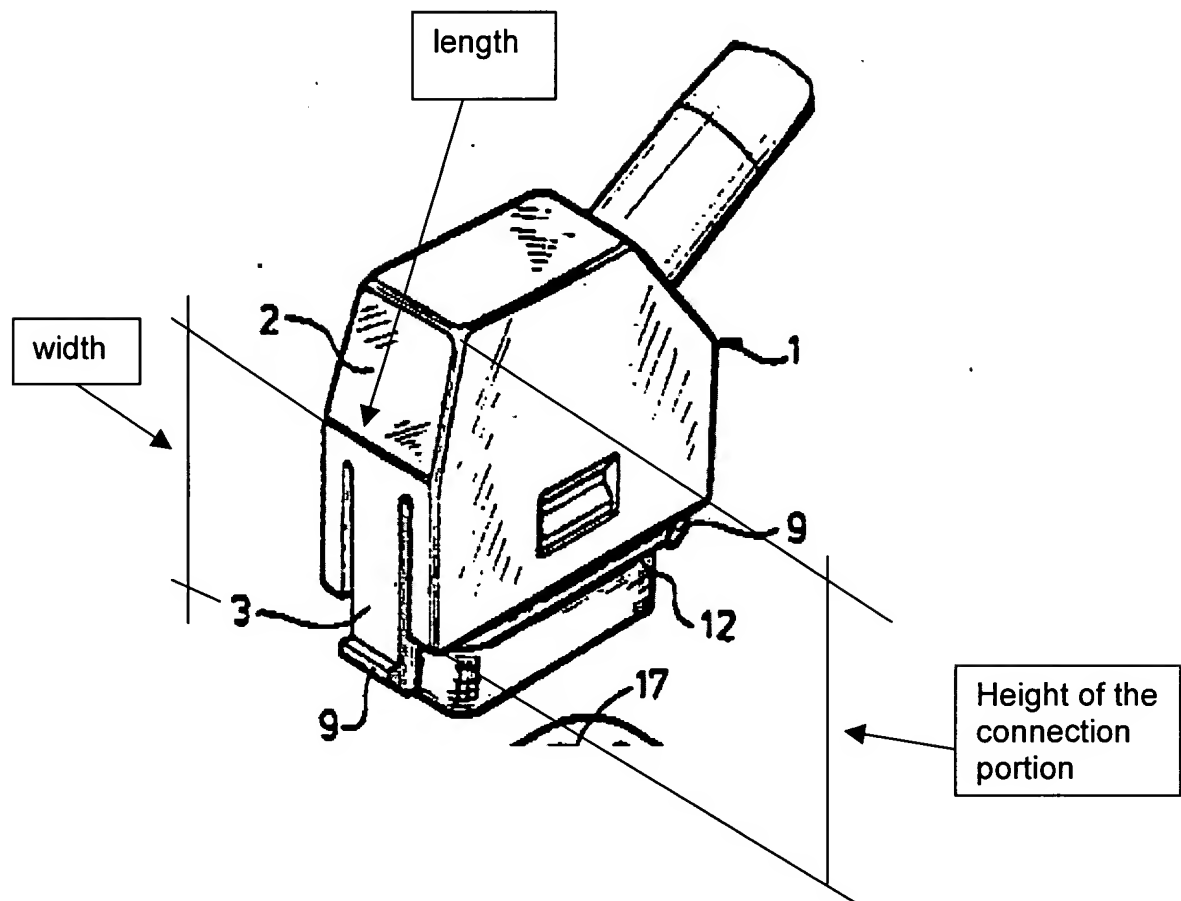
In regard to claim 28, Anhalt et al. discloses that the elastically deformable tab 46 presses against a wall of the other connection portion that is substantially plane (see fig. 1).

5. Claims 17 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Mouissie (5,080,603.

In regard to claim 17, Mouissie discloses an electrical connector having a housing comprising: a first housing element 1 provided with at least a first connection portion that is male; and a second housing element 4 provided with at least one second connection portion that is female, respectively, suitable for co-operating with the first connection portion; the first connection portion including at least one elastically deformable tab 3 made integrally with the corresponding connection portion in the thickness of a cylindrical of the connection portion, which wall defines a single cavity that presents, in cross-section, at least one side in the form of a straight line segment, the tab 3 extending, in cross-section, along the side, wherein the tab 3 presents, in

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cross-section, a width that is greater than half the length of the side (see attached drawing).



In regard to claim 20, Mouissie discloses that the at least one elastically deformable tab 43 extends over a major fraction of the height of the connection portion.



***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anhalt et al. in view of Mouissie (5,080,603).

In regard to claim 25, Anhalt et al. does not disclose that the rib 60 extends over the entire width of the tab 46.

Mouissie discloses that the rib 9 extends over the entire width of the tab 3.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Anhalt et al. by constructing the rib as disclosed by Mouissie in order to provide a stronger retaining mechanism for the connector.

8. Claims 29, 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anhalt et al.

In regard to claim 29, Anhalt et al. does not disclose at least one of the connection portions includes two adjacent cavities separated by an intermediate wall.

It would have been obvious to add an adjacent cavity to the connection portion for receiving another mating connection portion, while the additional cavity undoubtedly made it versatile, such a modification would have involved a mere change in the number of the parts. Duplication of parts for a multiplied effect is generally recognized

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as being within the level of ordinary skill in the art. *St Regis Paper Co. V. Bemis Co., Inc.*, 193 USPQ 8, 11 (7<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1977).

In regard to claim 32, regarding the particular dimension of the thickness, to the extent that Anhalt et al. does not specify exact dimension, at the time of the invention, workable dimensions of the thickness of the cylindrical wall would have been a matter of routine experimentation. In re Antonie, 559 F.2d 618 (CCPA 1977). Variations in the distance would have been obvious minor adjustments without patentable significance. See In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233 (CCPA 1955) (Where general conditions of the claim are disclosed in the prior art, it is not inventive to discover optimal or workable ranges by routine experimentation).

9. Claims 30 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anhalt et al. in view of Nishio et al. (6,659,801).

Anhalt et al. does not disclose that the housing elements are made of an electrically conductive material, in particular of aluminum so as to provide shielding for the housing.

Nishio et al. discloses that the housing elements 20, 40 are made of an electrically conductive material, in particular of aluminum so as to provide shielding for the housing 13, 17.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Anhalt et al. by constructing the housing

elements of electrically conductive material, in particular of aluminum as disclosed by Nishio et al. in order to provide shielding against EMI and thus provide a better connector.

**Conclusion**

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tho D. Ta whose telephone number is (571) 272-2014. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:00-5:30).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula A. Bradley can be reached on (571) 272-2800 ext 33. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



THO D. TA  
PRIMARY EXAMINER